

*your  
secretary  
#2*



i learned how to wear make-up  
from a girl named betty. it seems  
no coincidence that the skaters  
from my middle school called all  
pretty girls "betty" the two  
betties i know are both beaut-  
iful. my mother's given name is  
betty, though she goes by an  
androgynous moniker instead. i

was haunted as a child by pictures of my mother's modelling career. she told me not to wear make-up, so i didn't. i couldn't shave my legs, so i never have. i laughed at all the stories of gay girls falling for straight best friends, but there i was perched on the edge of her boyfriend's bath tub letting betty put make-up on me.

my heart hurt all the time and i knew i had to get out of town. i got mugged walking home from a party the same week alex told me he needed a new roommate in chicago. things were falling apart and together while the snow turned brown melting in the gutters. detroit was my closet where everyone just thought i was shaun's hag or dan's ex or the crazy girl who left a barrel of catshit on evan's lawn. i was tired of fucking "straight" girls who'd go back to their boyfriends in

the morning because it was "easier." there were a handful of queers and hos who made life bearable, but i spent an entire winter month behind the basement's barred windows watching nine seasons of roseanne in an unheated apartment. i still went to menjo's with shaun and klair on thursdays, even after the xandu remodel and the price of their rubbing alcohol mixed drinks were increased from \$1 to \$2. no amount of shenanigans made me feel differently - not the scuba diving classes i indulged in, the non-profit i worked for, or even saturday margarita night at cass cafe. i was privileged beyond belief, but the feeling of breathing underwater was as surreal as i felt in my daily life walking down warren with detroit cops yelling at me to "clean up my dogs crap." my first night in chicago nick john ditched me at madonna night only to arrive at my new apartment the next day declaring, "licking assholes is not as great as i thought it would be."

i say that after our fancy bday dinner that i am meeting someone for a movie which is by an act of conflation turned into a date by my family. everyone is teasing me in a way only the baby in the family, even at the age of 30, gets razzed. "is he cute?" is the chant from my cousin and sister-in-law. my dad is shifting uncomfortably in his leather chair. my mom is gripping her napkin under the table. "mom, you know i am not meeting a man." through her gritted teeth she says, "well, there's a 50% chance." "no, mom," i counter, "there is a 100% chance she is not."

and this conversation seems too ridiculous in the grand scheme of things. it is spinning out of time and space. i have considered myself out since high school when adrienne and i might not have been girlfriends,

but everyone (including my mother)  
knew we were fucking after  
school on my ratty twin bed.

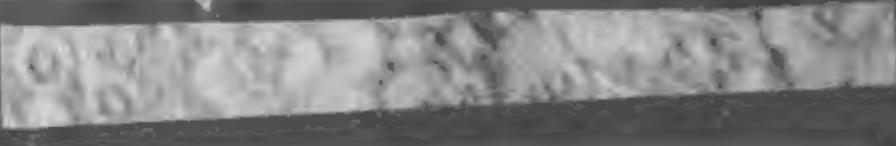
...but my parents deny any and  
everything that is inconvenient in  
their empire of silence. my father  
especially is the king of denial.  
when i graduated from high school  
with a full ride to automechanic  
school he asked if i could go to  
the school's sister hospitality  
school instead. "dad!" i shout-  
ed, "i am hostile! not hospitable!"  
they think everything is a fad or  
trend or worse, an new rebellion.  
they are in denial about every-  
thing they don't like about me -  
that i am fat (and proud), that  
i like to live in the city, that  
i ♥ detroit, that my friends are  
not all white, middle class, and  
almost none of them are straight,  
that i am a heavily tattooed woman.  
my father goes so far as to tell  
me that if i were to fall in love  
with a person of color i would be  
doing it with the sole purpose and

intent to upset him. in his mind  
i am an extension of him and  
everything i do is about him.

while the concept of coming out  
can be cathartic and self-actual-  
izing it is still based on the  
idea of "straight as default"  
while that paradigm continues,  
how out can you be? there are  
always be situations anew for  
coming out. it has been shown  
that society is more "accepting"  
of LGBTQAI (and the rest of the  
alphabet) if they know us, but  
this seems the old game of the  
oppressed having to teach the  
(cough cough) repressed about  
our (seriously!) undeniable  
humanity. the goal of coming  
out can be to normalize gay  
people. to me it seems quite  
othering in that it puts the  
onus on us to declare ourselves,  
sometimes to great anxiety.  
stating, for others consumption,  
something that is a natural and  
ingrained as the hand we favor  
to flip you off.

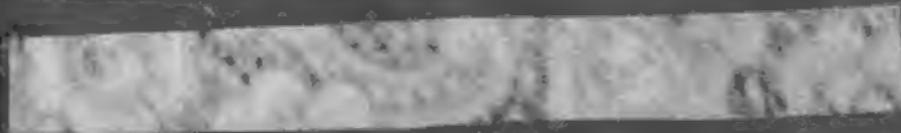
if you don't know i am queer you  
don't know me very well.

the idea of coming out is so tied to our family of origin saying, "you are okay," but there are so many ways family's tell ALL of us that we aren't exactly what they expected when the stork dropped us off that queerness (esp in a queer theory sense) is a moot point. i know that if i brought jesus himself home to mom and dad they might say "isn't his hair a little long?" having family say "you are okay" or even better "at 30, you know better who you are, what you need than we ever will." this is a thing i don't need to hear anymore from anyone. i just do it.



"for an ex-sex worker you sure are a prude." butchie says to me after the six whisky gingers that lashed me in her bed have worn off. inside i am thinking "way to be so fucked up & sham-ing," but on the outside i am still and quiet. later when i

realize i had left my favorite octopus necklace at her place and want it back she refuses. "listen, you seem like you want a girlfriend and i am not in the market for a girlfriend." "shit!" i shake my head, "the fact that i didn't want to have sex with you should be a clue that i clearly don't want to date you either." with much disdain she tells our mutual friends i don't put out and LB buys me a replacement octopus.



"look at that" i say, pointing into my 8x8 bedroom, "look at my bed." my bed is slouched all over the place, devouring the room, a big consuming mouth. "what a mess." when i was 19 i got my first big girl bed. my

parents said this would be my bed until i got married. i was married on that bed night after night until we thrust it out the window on a bright january afternoon. we watched it crash down on the neighbor's porch, crushing their lawn furniture. every 3 years i got a new bed, breaking each in succession. it was a joke in my family- a jump here, fuck there, a brawling drag out fight. in chicago i have had 3 beds. the futon from alex's mom's basement christened by neglected cats. reba's old hospital bed with the headboard for leverage and this princess & the pea monstrousity, a frankenstein composed of discards from departing roommates. it started with a lone mattress on the floor. girls would actually sleep with me on that miserable bed, an ocean of dog fur and floor grit washing over our bodies. miserable lays on that miserable bed. now i have two mattresses and a box spring, slipping and sliding all over each other each night, dumping me on

the floor each morning, puking up books and twisted underwear, scissors and ballpoint pens.

meredith tells me that after she heard i'd had my heart broken by some gay girl she didn't know that she used the few words she'd heard to describe this mythical woman to find her on the world wide web. "she seems so arrogant and self important," mere says in a bid to cheer me up, but i hunch my shoulders and turn my face away, feeling instantly sick to my stomach i wrap my arms around myself like an anchor. "listen," mere says in her low, sometimes inaudible way, "finding a girlfriend in this town is like trying to get a tenure position, you basically gotta wait for someone to die."

i thought i was the last person on earth to still sport a con-

spurious facial piercings, but today I met a cute girl with an obvious nose-ring obvious because it was not one of those small sparkley studs. Effie claims straight girls wear to flag that they are not too uptight to enjoy anal sex. No, this was an obvious nose-RING and I stared at it while she stared at me.

there has always been a policy of secrecy and silence in my family which I have defied at every turn. even as a child I was a non-stop chatterbox and divulger of private jet ins and outs. I provided a running commentary on our life. at 5 I became the designated patient, attending therapy weekly to discuss my uncontrollable anger and violent outbursts. as an adult, my therapist tells me that anger like that in children is usually a sign

that said cauld feel unatle to communicate.

although there were pictures of mark in our house i didn't know he was my brother until i was 8. it wasn't until my mid-twenties that i heard the story of his death. this knowledge did not come from my family. i was 6 months old when mark & the girl who was his passenger dies in a driving crash. according to the story i was told the wreck was caused by more than alcohol. the only time my mom acknowledged the existence of this girl was when i explicitly asked if my mom had attended her funeral. "no, she was a bad influence," the subtext being that my mom blamed her for the accident. i wish i knew my brother's girlfriend's name.

i have been told it is easier for me because i never knew mark. essence i don't know what i am missing, but living with the mythology (constructed with the few scraps of info i have about mark's life) has been

like living with a ghost,  
overcast in and with a  
shadow. the grief & loss that  
has informed my childhood &  
my relationship with my  
parents has not been easy  
either. i often feel kinship  
with others who have dealt  
with sudden loss early in life.  
i feel that mark was taken from  
us not only by his death, but our  
inability to talk about him.

it is important to save your  
story no matter how many times  
it has been told, how simple,  
self indulgent, poorly edited,  
articulated or imagined. please  
don't be silenced or sniped. our  
story is important. your words  
are important. do not let any-  
one, any authority, (say the story  
of you is not worth telling.

after dave and mike and sean i  
just can't make sense of it any-  
more. i ask my mom how mrs. p  
deals with keith's suicide.  
"with guilt," my mom says. "how  
do you deal with mark's death?"  
"we never talked to anyone  
about mark's death and maybe  
we should have, but it's too  
late now."

and i take a deep  
breath and say "it's never too  
late. there is always time. i  
am always here to talk about  
mark."

and sue tells me,  
"it's still too hard."

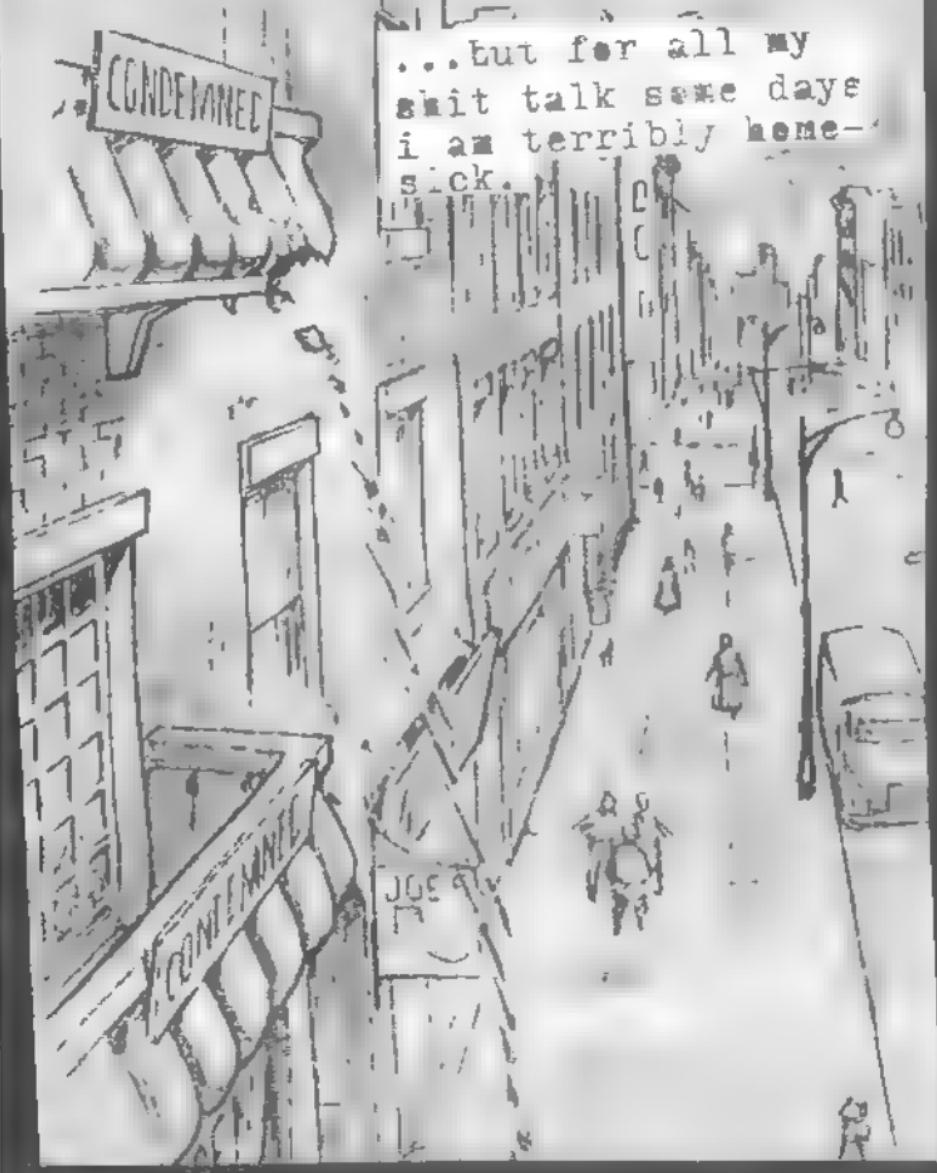
when i say i'm from detroit,  
people always ask "detroit  
proper?" because here in the  
windy city people from all  
over southeast michigan say  
they're from detroit. when  
they ask where i'm ~~from~~ REALLY  
from i don't know how to answer  
they city where i was born? the  
town where my father's best

friend built the house i grew up in? the notoriously racist town where i went to high school? baltimore - the first city i wasted away, homesick? dc a/k/a nova where i celebrated my 21st year by throwing my specially made diabetic birthday cake in a baby pool while my girlfriend fucked a marine next door? london, where caris and i played spouse for 6 months in fabulous ferdale where i was homeowner of the most disreputable house on the block? detroit, where i fought with slumlords like everyone else?

but i know i am from detroit despite everywhere else i have laid my head. she tells me anyone who knows what it's like to turn a trick in the leland hotel is from detroit. anyone who has driven the non-profits van the wrong way on an off ramp with impunity is from detroit. anyone who has gotten high in the makeshift office in the middle of the shrinking cities exhibit or thrown a handful of expensive french cheese down the front of an autoshow spandex blouse or been held up with an ax or car-jacked with a broken crackpipe

er ripped down a bathroom stall  
in a show of gay rage and been  
permanently banned from malebox  
is from detroit. anyone who has  
picked a fight with ~~them~~ bartender or  
bartender in the middle of uni-  
versity feeds over the honor of  
a beautiful girl is from detroit.  
and of course you have a mail-  
box at university feeds to get  
your zine mail if you live in  
detroit. anyone who has ever laid  
in the piss stained street sob-  
bing begging to be allowed to self-  
destruct in peace like any good  
detroiter or any of the 100s of  
other denumanizing things that  
happen while you are trying to  
survive in detroit.

"detroit is all about harm re-  
duction," she says while snorting a  
cock of the floor of our favorite  
dive bar, "detroit is lawless, just  
like you."



...but for all my  
shit talk some days  
i am terribly home-  
sick.

katie says jen is "the whole package." i ask if i am "the whole package." after a pause katie says, "you are a good storyteller" which is good enough. kirstin uses the term "whole package" to describe someone who's got it all - brains, beauty, integrity, confidence.

you have to be your own "whole package."

you are the "whole package"

finished feb 2010

DITTYBOX

EXCUSE IT/HEAVENS TO BETSY

LB ♥ to SHAUN alex  
kirstin meredith andrea  
nick john alana and  
you.

HEAVEN STREET





# adventures in public transit

Before I left the settle, -  
I ever read or will'st forget, -  
I mean to, - reason, for  
I had a son, -

It's a nice take forever to get anywhere and when they do, they often run into some trouble. -  
sped axles etc like shooting from a gun. Based on  
that idea, I made a  
bicycle, where it

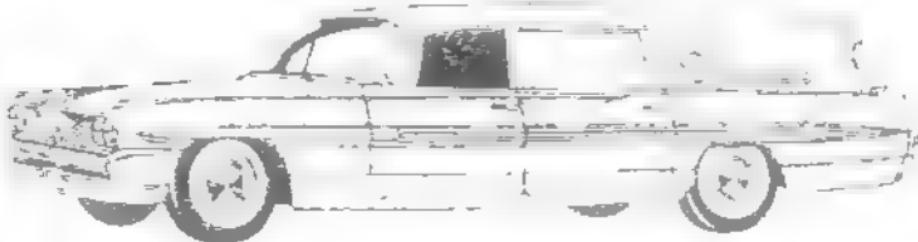
However, *see* *below*.

was to live  
in my life of active  
service in the cause of  
England.

1.

Leaving ...  
the back. Unfortunately, a nearby crackled ... sliced my tupperware container full of the kipper ... . She has made it her mission to my few bff.

she eyes my collection of short-sleeved shirts, ... . She asks ... . The word 'goddamn' is written across the end of the row. It ends in a high-pitched ... . ~~xx~~ that has ... . Statement over like a question. "Are those cockies jeans?" she asks. "I ... . This is ... . a ... , e. g. ... . This ... thing is taking his ... and I'm gonna ... ."



2. Meth couple stop at XXXX  
casually enter the bus and  
house, have to sit w/ I.O.  
and some initial fighting  
and shouting begins, talk  
over + ... recent visit  
to the hospital. B  
the unfortunate . . .  
  
I don't understand. He was  
is so fucking off and on,  
in his white thoughts  
of his past life, he  
scratches his head, and  
lets out a long sigh.  
I feel for him incredulous.  
"I didn't do an . . . ?!!"  
"I just got it"  
and shadows his face as he  
replies "I'm replacing them  
as my best friend because  
they're not there for me  
in this pan and til' the day





that you must force it to  
be silent in a people, so  
as to bring that normal  
process into complete control.



... don't I be waxing interminable.  
I'll just ... landmark, and it  
isn't quite to the HQ? ...  
... and forest? so here,  
the sun lights up the world  
and ... Richard, stirring  
up the voice. Give me to thy heart  
sea, seeking rock and a leaf  
... the ... wheezing  
the next day. This won't romp the  
boycou like nothing to do with  
it. Perfect out of the ...  
utter soul. It automatically  
assimilates the ... everything, but  
nothing ... almost envir-  
... and ... "just a ... what  
imaginative.



## Detroit is...

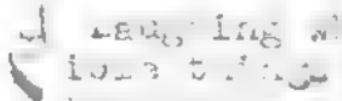
summer's spent delving  
in the beach on Belle Isle,  
as plenty of us do;  
in breezy sunsets  
at the beach...  
to have empty budweiser bot-  
tles there after you  
leave.

1. 

PEAKING, appearing in random  
interactions

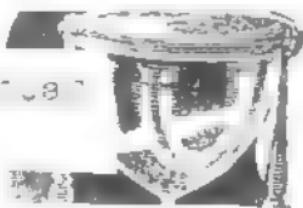


frankly, i don't like it.  
it's just... it's just...  
it's satisfaction's got a high  
a low club



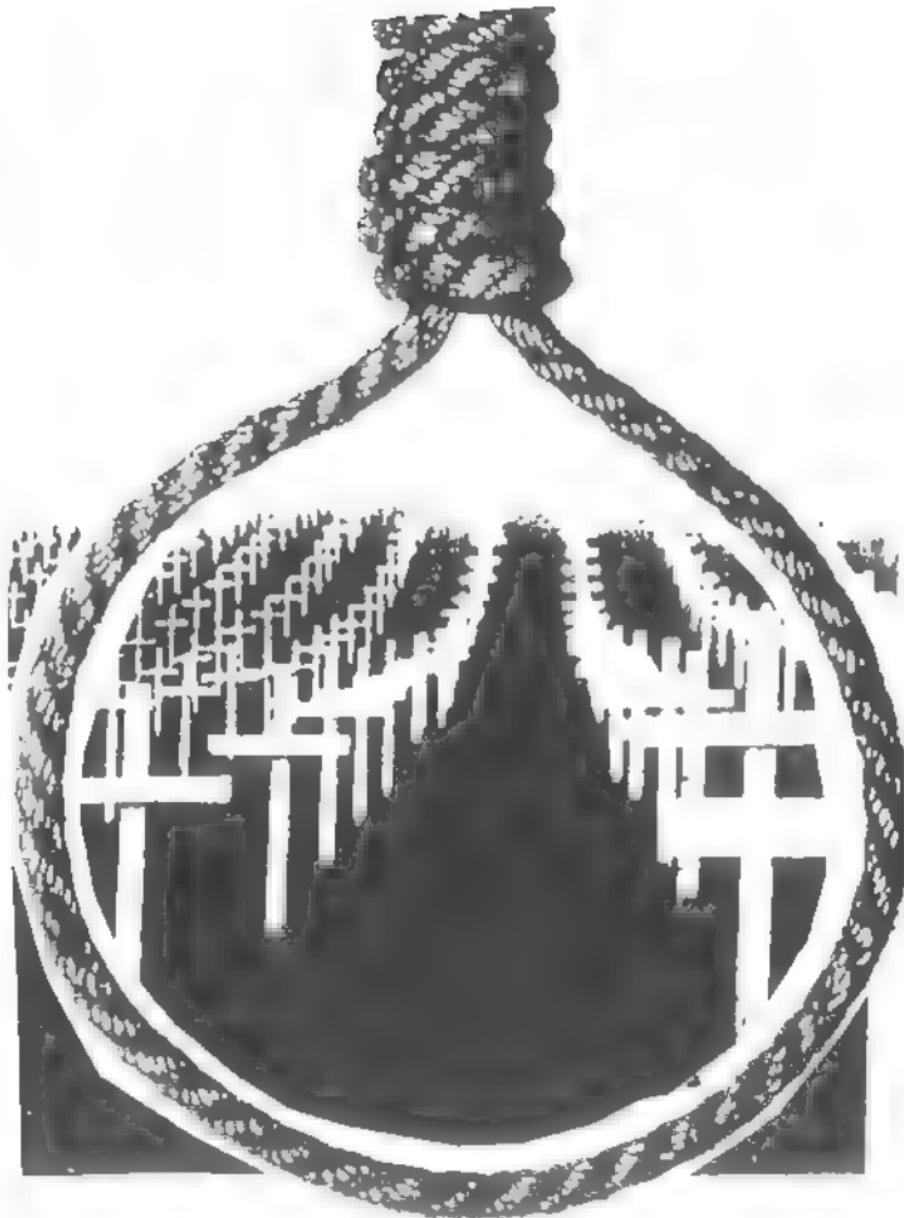
and leaving all alone, terr-  
rific things because  
the only... the only  
time i've been in the city

the best reddit never  
lets you down



white stripes and wolf eyes  
and adult i'm period at the  
end of it







- - - - -

I'm sorry ... I would be  
then I ever thought you  
haven't been doing  
the decision could have  
thought were inevitable. It's fine  
but I think it was just fine. Well,  
a great day and some good times,  
I'm still here.  
Still, I'll always be up  
in here ... whatever.  
Fuck it.



2 zine h



dictated over

elative-wra aing.

days in Oct:

Thanks for your help.

-17-

90101

and I am now  
in a year 2 high school, the second  
year which I subsequently con-  
signed myself to the "I". I  
would be riding the "I" and  
from school, I would be  
mentally strong  
and fit. Unfortunately,  
I did not do so.

I am now in an experimental  
program. It can be an ad-  
mirable experience, but it can also be the  
worst. It's a most interesting little  
slice of hell. The town of  
Tukwila will be my home for the  
next two years. This means a lot of  
driving and/or a lot of  
driving towards the city of Seattle.  
Periodically, I will be  
in Seattle for a month or so at a time  
and I will be in

middle aged female who is being called a 'fuck-the-bitch' by her son. She declares she will never let him do it again. She says she has had enough. This is okay...I think he declares as she walks away. She then proceeds to tell her son that she went in oak harbor and how the state is like a prison. Finally, she goes to 'Norman' at the top of the stairs and manages to get him to say, "In the name of the Lord, I'm sorry." The woman then says, "So is the moron?"



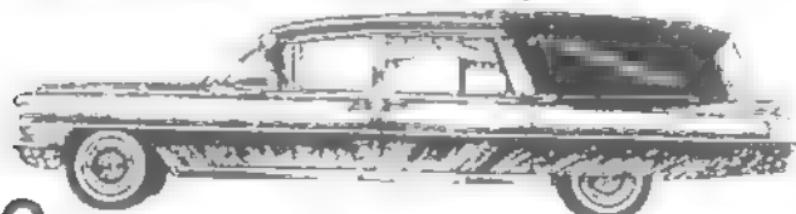
... begins  
to crackle and sputter.

I bought it' and I  
brought to her last birthday.

quietly while

it you be fit? Then

before you  
try to get him  
immediately falling a-  
sleep next to his head.



3.

WHAT IF

...I, a



## My last week

Mon. Oct. 1 - 1956

It's more of a bizarre kind of lang. MY annual ea our last show.

We had delayed our first--a V--show. I slipped off to L.A., packed up my car and sold it. Ate at Los Altos, drove home.

Last time, I got my v. hit bad by some random people who then looked at my car and a fellow who said on the way down 101, "Hows her?" etc.

That's one of my days. I'll do a few more pictures

of the show. It just sort of crept up on me like a cold bite in the night.

It'll be more & less once

you leave us for aye.



- sneers from the patrons of gay night at the atlas bar after you and a friend loudly deride 'all of these fags dancing to new order'.
- sneers from the patrons of every gay bar period.
- drag queen performances that include 20 minutes of ranting about their 'bitch-ass roommates'.
- the 6 dollar manager's special from sicily's in mexicantown
- driving down woodward at dusk, feeling that almost anything is possible
- driving down woodward in the wintertime and feeling that everything is hopeless and that you'd might as well just go home and get drunk



old houses and multiple  
roomates/cheap rent that  
half your roommates can't  
pay cuz it's noon and they're  
drunk again, have no jobs and  
just spent all their money  
on records

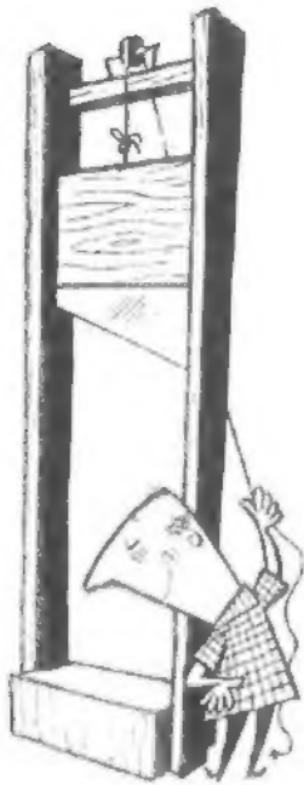
summer shows at the detroit  
art space r.i.p.

DETROIT JUST IS, FOREVER AND EVER..

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

You are the love of my life. You made what should have been one of the hardest decisions of my life easy and you make everyday better for me by just being here. My heart nearly explodes every time we sing 'Angel of Death' together. I love you.

Xoxo,  
Shaun



NICE TO MEET YOU.  
HAVE A NICE DAY.